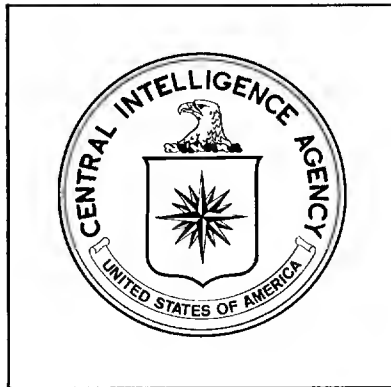


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STAFF NOTES:

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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the USSR - Eastern Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Sakharov Adds to Kremlin's Woes

The already sizable headache presented the Soviet regime by leading dissident spokesman, physicist Andrey Sakharov--who on October 9 was awarded the 1975 Nobel Peace Prize--may soon grow even worse. This spring, Sakharov lent his name to the organizers of a blue-ribbon, international tribunal on the status of human rights in the Soviet Union; the conclave, which has been almost a year in the planning, is slated to be held in Copenhagen October 17-19.

In Moscow, a Foreign Ministry official reportedly declined Western press requests for comment on Sakharov's Nobel award. As a possible harbinger of a campaign to come, a Tass English-language commentary on October 10 attacked the Nobel Committee's "political gesture" saying it was designed to "kindle the anti-Soviet campaign and impede the easing of international tension." It called Sakharov a man who has "put himself in a position of an anti-patriot and an opponent of peaceful coexistence." Sakharov, meanwhile, told Western reporters that he views the prize as beneficial to the cause of human rights in the USSR, but he hopes the Kremlin will not see it as a "challenge."

The Soviet regime has not commented directly on the Copenhagen tribunal, even while Tass has replayed for foreign consumption some of the more derisive comment by Western leftist media on the Sakharov hearing. Tass focused on questioning Sakharov's "humanist" credentials and on dark hints about the sources of the meeting's financial backing.

The Sakharov hearing will take place at Christiansborg Palace, the seat of the Danish parliament. It is sponsored by the Council of Eastern Exiles, a Danish organization of many years' standing, composed of emigres from Eastern Europe and the Baltic states.

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The sponsors have also succeeded in bringing together an "Honorary Committee of Protectors of Andrey Sakharov," consisting of over a dozen prominent, Western public figures as well as leading exiles from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Exiled Soviet author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn--who has already congratulated Sakharov on his Nobel award--is among those invited to attend the conclave, but it is not clear whether he, or all those on the honorary committee, will be present.

If the hearing follows early plans, it will cover the entire range of human rights violations in the USSR, from religious oppression to curbs on freedom of movement. Its main focus, however, will be on receiving testimony from survivors of Soviet prisons, labor camps, and psychiatric hospitals on the "violations of international standards of human rights" in these institutions. The sponsors have solicited testimony, oral and written, from "any person able to give it." Several prominent Soviet exiles, including Andrey Sinyavsky and Solzhenitsyn's colleague, Vladimir Maksimov, are expected to testify.

In explaining earlier this year the use of Sakharov's name for the hearing, one of the leading organizers said that Sakharov alone among 250 million Soviet citizens is able to speak freely. Sakharov's prominence at home and abroad, and his record of public appeals on behalf of the very causes the hearing intends to examine, made him an obvious and early choice. There is no evidence that the sponsors of the meeting knew beforehand that Sakharov was considered for the Nobel Peace Prize. Dissidents in Moscow close to Sakharov have already said that the Nobel award was totally unexpected. The award, just a week before the opening of the Copenhagen hearing, will clearly attract added international attention to its proceedings.

The explosion of Sakharov's name into the world's headlines will also revive and intensify speculation about his own future. Dissident sources say that although he does not wish to abandon the many causes he

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has embraced in the USSR by leaving for good, his reported ill health and fears that his wife who is recuperating from eye surgery in Italy may not be permitted to return home could force Sakharov to think of emigrating. Sakharov has said that he would go to Oslo to accept his prize if Soviet authorities gave him permission.

The Soviet regime itself has for some time shown signs of debating the pros and cons of allowing a man of Sakharov's stature to emigrate if he chooses--or making him stay. This dilemma will become more painful with the publicity surrounding Sakharov's Nobel award and with the expected international pressure on the Kremlin to allow him to go to Oslo. Soviet leaders will clearly bear in mind the parallel of Solzhenitsyn, who won the Nobel Literature prize in 1970 but declined to go to Stockholm unless assured he could return to the USSR. The affair ended with his expulsion in February 1974. In the four intervening years Solzhenitsyn's name stayed prominently in the headlines, and tarred the Soviet image abroad.

Sakharov's gradual slide into dissident activities during the 1960s resulted in his being slowly cut off from his work in the Soviet nuclear program. He was finally fired and his security clearance lifted shortly after the June 1968 publication in the West of his renowned essay, "Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom." Since May 1969 he has held a relatively low ranking job as part-time senior researcher at the Lebedev Institute of Physics in Moscow.

Sakharov has remained a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences throughout his travails. He even attended the opening in Moscow of the Academy's 250th anniversary celebrations on October 7 and listened to General Secretary Brezhnev's keynote address. Sakharov's contacts there with numerous, visiting, Western scientists will increase the magnitude of the problem he poses to the regime.

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Although Sakharov has agreed to the use of his name at the Copenhagen meeting, his concern about further jeopardizing his wife's chances to return home and his probable desire not to appear to capitalize too much too soon on the publicity stemming from the Nobel award may mute the message he is expected to send.

Sakharov's past public statements suggest that he rests his hope for domestic improvement in the sphere of human rights in the USSR on pressure from Western media, governments, statesmen, and major international organizations. Sakharov appears less convinced of the influence of exile groups, whose frequent, internecine problems, he believes, vitiate their effectiveness. Internal problems and disagreements among various exile groups in Western Europe reportedly were the main reasons for the postponement of the Copenhagen hearing from the original target date in early spring to October this year.

Much of the internal discord among exiles appears rooted in a conflict of generations: between those emigres of long standing who totally reject the Soviet system, and those more recently arrived who tend to look more favorably on the idea of evolutionary reform. One notable exception to the latter is, of course, Solzhenitsyn, who apparently has found the more conservative emigres sympathetic to his authoritarian, nationalistic and religious vision of Russia's non-communist future. Early this month, Solzhenitsyn sent a message to one such exile group, expounding his views and calling emigre unity behind them "the last hope of this continent." The strongly democratic, soberly reformist Sakharov has never subscribed to this outlook, and has thus been able to reach a wider Western audience as a spokesman for human rights in the USSR. This contrast between Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov is a further measure of the Kremlin's problem in dealing with the dissident physicist. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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French President Arrives in Romania Tomorrow

French President Giscard d'Estaing will start a four-day visit to Bucharest on October 11 before going on to Moscow next Tuesday.

His visit will repay President Ceausescu's trip to Paris in 1970. Since then, few high-level French officials visited Bucharest. Instead, Paris has stressed improving its ties elsewhere in East Europe, particularly with the Poles and Soviets. Giscard may hope to smooth over some ruffled feelings in Bucharest, where officials often point with pride to the common Latin heritage of the French and Romanian peoples.

Ceausescu and company will seek to expand economic ties with the French. In particular, Bucharest is anxious to encourage joint economic enterprises in Romania such as one set up last December for the production of medical equipment.

On the political side, the Romanians will undoubtedly press for expressions of mutual interest in the preservation of national independence and sovereignty in the spirit of the Helsinki summit. Bucharest is also likely to voice its concern over military blocs and the need for general disarmament. The Romanians may use the occasion to reiterate the need to establish a de-nuclearized zone in the Balkans. (CONFIDENTIAL)


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French President to Moscow

French President Giscard d'Estaing arrives in the Soviet Union on Tuesday to begin the latest in a series of routine summit visits. There are few substantive reasons for negotiations at this level and the main purpose of the trip seems to be to preserve appearances of a "special relationship" between France and the USSR. Soviet ability to fill time and space with platitudes will be severely taxed, and it appears that the French have given up even the pretense. Much of Giscard's four-day stay will be devoted to protocol functions and tourism.

The Soviets will probably seek general French endorsement of the European security conference and of detente. The French, in contrast, are more interested in specifics.




The Soviets may try to win French support for their disarmament proposals and make another attempt to draw the French into the European force reduction talks. There is no indication, however, that the French will reverse their decision not to participate.

Some economic matters are also likely to be discussed. A Soviet diplomat in Paris expects Moscow's unfavorable balance of trade to be a topic. General agreements on cooperation in the production of civilian aircraft and Soviet oil sales to France may emerge.

As has become customary before Franco-Soviet summits, a French Communist Party delegation held consultations in Moscow two weeks ago. (SECRET NOFORN/ORCON)

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Yugoslavs React Cautiously to Soviet
Protest of Bijedic Banquet in Peking

Yugoslav media have not yet reported that all Soviet bloc ambassadors except Romania walked out on a speech that Premier Bijedic's Chinese host gave at a banquet in Peking. (*Staff Notes*, October 7.)

Only Milika Sundic, Radio Zagreb's well-informed reporter, has even touched on potential problems with Moscow arising from Bijedic's precedent-setting visit to China. In a commentary on Thursday, he summed up the visit in generally favorable terms, but emphasized that well-known Yugoslav-Chinese differences have not been erased. He asserted that Belgrade's relationship with Peking is completely proper--i.e., not anti-Soviet in its essence--and is no business of third countries.

Definitive propaganda guidelines on the incident may not be laid down until after Bijedic returns home in about 10 days. In the meantime, the US embassy in Belgrade reports that Soviet diplomats on Tuesday expressed their anger over Chinese "entrapment" of Yugoslavia into an anti-Soviet action.

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CEMA Summit Preparations

Party secretaries from the nine CEMA countries met in Moscow on Thursday and Friday to finish work on a document to be released at the CEMA summit later this year, [REDACTED] A similar meeting in early September failed to work out language on the most controversial issues.

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A Soviet diplomat has asserted that the Romanians, who apparently caused the most problems, had "agreed in principle" on wording for the summit document during talks with Soviet party secretary Katushev in Bucharest last week. The Soviet acknowledged, however, that a considerable number of "details" were still unresolved.

Even if agreement is reached on language for a communique or a "basic" document spelling out future integration tasks, some fundamental differences on economic integration within CEMA will remain. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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East Europeans Say Situation
Along Sino-Soviet Border Calm

The Soviets are using their East European allies to get out the word that Moscow is doing its best to avoid aggravating tensions along the Sino-Soviet border.

Moscow last month played host to a group of East European journalists for a rare tour along both the riverine and land border between the USSR and China. The last such tour took place in late 1970. Since the first week in September two Hungarian journalists and one Polish journalist, in relating their experience to home audiences, have emphasized that Moscow is bending over backward to avoid serious border problems.

One broadcast maintains, for example, that Soviet border guards have been expressly ordered not to throw cigarette butts on China's side of the border because the Chinese once complained about such violations of their territory. The same article maintains that Soviet troops are kept well away from the border, that the Soviets are careful to conduct reconnaissance activity away from the border area, and that Soviet border guard posts in the Far East are no different than those anywhere else in the Communist world--i.e., the border guards are equipped only with small arms and tracking dogs. The broadcast contrasts Moscow's alleged restraint with the shows of hostility on the Chinese side, where Chinese villages resemble camps of the "Roman legions."

One broadcast conceded that the situation along the border is "not natural," but says explicitly that the level of tension is nowhere near that of 1969.

The Soviets have not yet replayed the broadcasts and we do not know whether other East Europeans were actually shown the border areas. One

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possibility, however, is that the trip was designed to reassure the East Europeans that conflict with China is not anticipated. This could be tied in with the recently signed Soviet - East Germany treaty, which--in contrast to the 1964 treaty--contains a clause that implies the East Germans have an obligation to help the USSR in the event of conflict with China. The new treaty probably will become the model for Soviet treaties with other East European countries.

Another possibility is that the articles are intended as a signal to the Chinese that despite the Soviets' current propaganda offensive against Peking, the continuing stalemate in the border talks, and the failure of the two sides--for the first time in 20 years--to hold the annual river navigation talks, Moscow does not want to fan tensions along the border, and Moscow has publicly expressed concern that the chance of a Chinese-initiated incident increases with the rise of political tensions in China.

If an incident does occur, the broadcasts help lay the groundwork for a USSR claim that it was the injured party. Moscow may see some additional need for such spadework now, in view of its public assertions that the chance of a Chinese-initiated incident increases with the rise of political tensions in China.

There is also a far-out hypothesis that the Soviets are playing up their interest in a quiet Sino-Soviet border to cover some plan of their own to instigate trouble. We think this is still highly unlikely for many reasons, including the fact that Moscow knows that Mao would use any such incident further to solidify China's anti-Soviet course.
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